

BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
EXECUTIVE SESSION #1  
February 4, 2008

The Executive Session convened at 8:50 p.m. in the Selectmen's Room to discuss land acquisition. Present were Margaret B. Briggs, Chairman; Virginia McIntyre, Gregory P. Howes, Clerk; Anne Shapiro, and Stanly Black. Also present was Christopher Whelan, Town Manager.

The Town Manager reported that he had received a letter on December 10, 2007 from Attorney Robert McWalter, who represents the Scimone family. Mr. McWalter asked for a meeting to discuss the purchase of the Scimone Farm in East Concord by the Town in exchange for a lifetime tenancy and a commitment not to develop the farmland. The Town made similar arrangements with Richard Marshall on Harrington Ave.

The Town Manager has reported in the past that the Scimone's were interested in selling the farm land to the Town. The family now appears interested in discussing the matter in depth. Mr. Whelan spoke with John Stevens, presidents of the Land Trust who stated that Trust hopes to acquire and/or protect all the farm land in Concord.

Ms. Briggs commented that should Alexan Concord be approved this spring, the Town would be protected from any further Chapter 40B developments. Therefore the purchase price of any other farm land in Concord should reflect true market value rather than the inflated value based on a 40B development. Moreover, much of the land in east Concord is quite wet and has limited development potential particularly related to septic systems. The property fronts on the new sewer extension, however the owner has a right to only a single sewer connection.

Mr. Howes commented that farming community in Concord has expressed concern that no young people are getting into farming. The Town can be acquiring farm land, but what is the point if there is no one willing to farm it. If the land is not farmed, the drainage ditches will become clogged, overgrown and increasingly wet. This should also be kept in mind when the Town contemplates purchasing property for permanent agricultural protection.

Ms. Shapiro asked if the Agricultural Committee might have some ideas about how to foster farming among younger people. Ms. Briggs commented that housing for farm workers is an issue. Perhaps flexibility on developing farm worker housing could help make farming more viable in Concord. She added that according to John Bemis, organic farming is actually quite viable in Concord. There is a mark-up on the produce, but it is sold locally as a less of carbon footprint item. There are other benefits to organic farming.

Ms. McIntyre asked if forgiveness of taxes could be part of the equation in discussing ideas and opportunities with the Scimone family.

There was a consensus that the Town Manager should meet with Mr. McWalter and perhaps members of the family and find out what they might be thinking and report back to the Board.

No votes were taken

On a motion duly made and seconded it was:

**VOTED:** To adjourn the Executive Session at 9:05 and enter Session 2.

Ms. McIntyre	Aye
Mr. Howes	Aye
Ms. Shapiro	Aye
Mr. Howes	Aye
Ms. Briggs	Aye

Respectfully submitted,

Gregory P. Howes, Clerk